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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/055,399	01/23/2002	John J. Gregel	ERICP0329USA	7238

7590

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EXAMINER

OMGBA, ESSAMA

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3726

DATE MAILED: 04/06/2004

11

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/055,399

Applicant(s)

GREGEL ET AL.

Examiner

Essama Omgba

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21, 35 and 37-62 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 10-12, 18 and 20 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 35 and 40-60 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 14, 16, 21, 37-39, 61 and 62 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4, 6-9, 15, 17 and 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 37-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 37-39 depend on canceled claim 36.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-3, 5, 13, 14, 16, 21, 61 and 62 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Williams (US Patent 5,513,425).

With regards to claims 1-3, and 13, Williams discloses a coupling tool comprising opposing drivers 72, 73, a pair of arms 74, 76 capable of engaging a respective seat for movement towards each other and power means 81 to move the arms towards each other, see column 4, lines 61-67, column 5, lines 1-10 and figures 10 and 11. Applicant should note that the tool of Williams is capable of engaging seats supporting tapered sleeves and moving them as contemplated by Applicant. Applicant should note that

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neither the structure of a reinforcing bar has been recited nor the seats and tapered sleeves positively recited to be structurally limiting. Arguably Williams' tool could be used to form a reinforcing bar connection. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, that the tool of Williams could be used to form a reinforcing bar connection since Williams' tool is capable of engaging seats supporting tapered sleeves and drive the seats axially.

For claim 5, Applicant should note that the collar lends no patentable weight to the tool being claimed.

For claims 14 and 16, see column 5, lines 6-10.

For claim 21, Applicant should note that the seats and means to open and close the seats lend no patentable weight to the tool being claimed.

For claims 61 and 62, the tool of Williams does not translate as the arms are driven axially.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

5. Claims 4, 6-9, 15, 17 and 19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

6. Claims 35 and 40-60 are allowed.

### ***Response to Arguments***

7. Applicant's arguments filed on December 30, 2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the tool of Williams would be capable of the forces needed to cause contraction of a jaw assembly onto reinforcing bar ends) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). As outlined above in the rejections, no structure of a reinforcing bar has been recited to structurally limit the tool for reinforcing bars, there is no recitation of forces needed to operate the tool either.

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Essama Omgba whose telephone number is (703) 305-2915. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (10-7:30) First Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Vo can be reached on (703) 308-1789. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

eo  
April 4, 2004

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Jm fba", is located in the lower right quadrant of the page.